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THE
LIVING AND ALMOST DYING
EXPERIENCE OF
ANDREW KESSELL,
late Minister of the Gospel at the
OCTAGON TABERNACLE, IN PENZANCE:
AND FOR SEVERAL YEARS BOTH BEFORE AND SINCE
of the
INDEPENDENT MEETING,
IN MEVAGISSEY, CORNWALL.

Written by himself, in the near views of death.

Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my
Soul. PSAL. 66: 16.

TRURO;

PRINTED BY W. HARRY.

1800.

LIVING AND ALMOST DUNG

ANDREW KESSELL

CLAY & TAYLOR, INVENTORS

INDEPENDENT MACHINES



Goods and have all the same Old and I will give you a full description of the same
Sent. Ball No. 10

PREFACE.

DEAR READER,

I am now standing on the very verge of the Grave; being in the 76 year of my age, and by a Paralytic stroke about three years since, greatly debilitated in speaking and writing; yet I bless the Lord that to a wonder I retain my other faculties unimpaired, but being now entirely superannuated from public Preaching, (in which state I expect to be during my short abode in this life) I would gladly as I can, still be holding forth the word of Life to my fellow Sinners; hoping that as my aim have been above these fifty years, to feed the Church of God; which he hath so dearly purchased with his own Blood. (Acts, 20, 28) in which time I have preached many thousand Sermons extempore, but never wrote one in full length until now, and am perswaded never shall more: Being ever willing, and still am, to take the Lords repeated advice, comfort ye, comfort ye, my People. (Isa. 40, 1.) And being perswaded that he hath laid me under the command; for who else can he mean by the thrice repeated ye? but the very same which the great Apostle specifies who are able to comfort them who are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God? (2, Cor. 1, 4.) this being through Grace the case, I being my self such a large partaker of his consolations, and seeing many of God's dear Children hanging down their heads and frequently complaining my leanness, my leanness! (Isa. 24, 16.) I am not willing

PREFACE.

to eat my morsel alone (*Job. 31, 17.*) seeing in our Fathers House there is Bread enough and to spare, (*Luke 15, 17.*) especially as I by sparing, have never the less; but have frequently found an abundant increase.

This then I believe is my last public work: The words of dying men are often particularly observed, and retained, I leave the following discourse, as my Legacy to the Church of Christ; being fully perswaded, that if they will take the advice herein contained, joining their prayers with mine, in Faith to God in the name of Jesus; they shall succeed. (*Math. 18, 19, 20.*) That this method may be pursued by thee my dear Reader, and that thou mayest witness when my head is in the silent grave, divine comfort hereby; that thou mayest say, he being dead, yet speaketh. (*Heb, 11, 4.*)

I know full well, that appropriating Faith, or what an Apostle calls confidence towards God; (*1. John 2, 28.*) and another bids, hold fast the beginning of your confidence; (*Heb. 3. 6.*) and again, cast not away your confidence: (*Heb. 10, 35.*) Some will allow it to be "a Christians privilege, but that few enjoy it": Alas! alas! poor indolent professor! is it any wonder for a man to pine, who can live without Bread? Christ is he: the Bread that giveth life to the World: and be assured if thou canst live one day without living upon Christ, thy Soul is starving. Pardon me if I say thou neither knowest Christ, nor the power of his Resurrection: (*Phil.*

PREFACE.

(Phil. 3, 10.) O! do be perswaded; faith is the substance of Christ formed in the heart; pray then my dear friend, do not be cheated with shadows. That the Lord may take this discourse into his Almighty hand, where I dedicate it, and render it abundantly useful to console and strengthen thy precious Soul; and that thou mayest say, I know in whom I have believed (2. Tim. 1. 12.) is the prayer of thy souls lover,

in the best of Bonds,

ANDREW KESSELL.

MELVACISSEY, 1800.

A SERMON.



A S E R M O N.

THE TEXT,

PHIL. 1. 21.

To me to live is Christ, and to die is Gain.

I AM sensible that these words are often taken for the Text of funeral discourses, and sometimes not improper, if it be looked on in that light, with respect to me; I apprehend my method will be singular, perhaps quite unprecedented to write my own Funeral Sermon; but if taken as spoken, it appears to me to be the heart-felt experience of a living man, in the views of death. On casting my eyes lately on the words, I found such a peculiar opening of them to my

my mind, as to adopt them for my own. The spirit (I trust) which dictated the original, applied them to my soul, so as to delight me! I saw my present possession was Christ! and O! what beauties were unfolded! what discoveries made of the unsearchable riches of him, who is *the fullness of him that filleth all in all.* (Eph. 1. 23) *and all in him, my own! to me to live is Christ!* and then, to read and see the contents of the latter part of the *text; Gain. to die is Gain!* here my glorious inheritance stood forth, to view! so as quite to reconcile me to lay down this old shattered tabernacle aged 76, being fully perswaded, I shall be an immense gainer thereby. Now this delighted subject so repeatedly recured to my mind, that I clearly saw I had enough for both worlds! time, and eternity. *Christ in life! gain in death!* these things being the result of my own experience; I, even I, unworthy as I am in myself (being accounted worthy in Christ, (Luke 21, 36.) make bold to adopt the words as *my own*, with as much propriety, and by the same spirit as the original author: That I therefore may if possible, have a clearer discovery of their contents, for the establishment of my own soul; or, any who demean themselves to give time for the perusal of my feeble effort. I purpose to consider:

- 1.—What is implied in, *for me to live is Christ?*
- 2.—What *for me to die is gain?* and
- 3.—*Attempt some uses.*

1. I would enquire, what is implied in "for me to live is Christ."

Here is an object, beyond the comprehension of angels; they look into it! but finite minds cannot fathom *the infinite Jehovah-Jesus: God manifest in the flesh!* this then, is enough for my meditation, admiration, consolation, adoration, and imitation: in life, death, and for ever, Lord help in my discovery. I apprehend in the general, it means, *living upon Christ*, as my daily bread is meditation, or contemplation: to dwell in my thoughts on him, and his unsearchable riches, as the *grand object* of my *desire, faith, hope, love, and delight*: or, in a scripture language for *Christ to dwell in my heart by faith*, (Eph. 3. 17.) to know that the life that I live in the flesh, I live by faith in the son of God, who hath loved me, and *given himself for me*, (Gal. 2, 20.) to know, and feel, as well as read: *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*: this is the world's enthusiasm, but genuine biblism Christ is all, and in all. (Col. 3, 11.) Jesus tells his followers, because I live, ye shall live also. (John, 14, 19.) as sure then as Christ the church's head, (Eph. 4, 15.) hath *life in himself*: so sure I a member of Christ, being joined to the Lord in one spirit. (1. Cor. 6, 17.) thus living and believing in him, have such a life as shall *never die!* (John, 11, 26.) In a word, it is to have *fellowship* with the Father, and the Son, by the Spirit, (1. Cor. 1. 9.) appropriating

Christ whosoever knows this experimentally, *knows the joyful sound*; they are truly blessed: *they walk in the light of Gods countenance all the day*; and in his righteousness they are, and shall be exalted. (Psal. 89, 16.) this being through grace my case, I without ostentation, *glory in the Lord*. (1. Cor. 1, 31) rejoicing Christ Jesus; while I have *no confidence in the flesh*, (Phil. 3, 3.) do boldly say "*to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*".

But to particularize; first, to me to live is Christ, is, "*to take a distinct view of his covenant engagements, with his Father for me*:" Had not this been done, I had been undone for ever, but, amazing act of love! I who was one who lay amongst the heap of the fallen rubbish of mankind, was one of the number given of the Father of all mercies, to his beloved Son! my Christ, (John 17, 2.) on certain conditions stipulated, when *the well ordered council of peace was between them both*. (Zech. 6, 13.) infinite wisdom foresaw man's awful fall, and utter inability to raise himself; and his law being broken, which required *perfect obedience*: or without a *sufficient atonement*, death: the sacrifices also failing to atone for and take away sin, Christ cried out, *lo, I come to do thy will O God, thy law is in my heart*. (Psal. 40, 7.) now to live by faith on *this everlasting covenant*; Christ engaging to be my *surety*, and the Father ratifying the bargain, saying "*I will give to thee a covenant to the people*" (Isa. 47, 6.)

to his seed to me; seeing he hath made *with me* in my surety, this everlasting covenant: (Isa. 55, 7.) the promise thus made with Christ, (Gal. 3, 16.) and to all his seed, (Rom. 4, 16.) to me, who believe as *personally* and individually *to and with me*, who take hold of his covenant, (Isa. 56, 4) thus to live upon Christ, is worth living for, and this to me to live is Christ: *sweetly meditating and living on his covenant engagements*, by appropriating faith.

2. To me to live is Christ; to behold by faith, my Saviour, who had pre-engaged "*entering upon the undertaking*" that which Christ had covenanted, bargained, &c. to be *the surety of this better covenant*: (Heb. 8, 6.) namely, *to do, and suffer all that God's law demanded of man*; this he comes to perform! important, and mysterious undertaking, he, so struck with my woeful condition, lying under the wrath of insenced justice, or, his bowels yearning over my poor soul, springs to the arduous work without hesitation; cast a side, as at his heels the company, the adorations of all the angelic host, preferring my happiness to his own! *his delights were with the helpless sons of men!* (Prov. 8, 31.) down he comes, wrapping his god-head in my frail humanity! exposed to all that wicked men and devils could inflict, thus he who was infinitely rich, possessor of both heaven and earth (Gen. 14, 19.) became poor, that I through his poverty might be Rich! (2. Cor. 8, 9.) now when I
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dwell on this wonderful undertaking and discover the freeness of his heart to undertake this important work for one so unworthy! he absolutely did it from *pure unmerited love to hell-deserving me!* (Gal. 2. 20.) when I can view *by faith*, this dear Emanuel entering the list against all my formidable antagonists, this is to me *to live is Christ.*

3. When I contemplate, so as in some good degree to realize Christ not only covenanting to obey, suffer, and die for me, as leaving heaven for earth, but *actually going through the whole which he undertook;* completing his design in my redemption: This is to me to live is Christ. Here I view the great legislator of all worlds, becoming a subject, putting himself under the law for me. (Gal. 4. 4.) I had repeatedly broken God's holy law; one offence *laid* me under its curse, all my efforts where ineffectual to make satisfaction—*divine justice insisted upon full payment,* no man nor angel could repair the breach, (Isa. 58. 12.) when thus my case was desperate, and I insolvent; lo! Christ without *any deserts or desires in me,* stood forth the sinners friend, *and became my substitute!* paid the demands of the law in *full for me:* for he hath in thought, (Psal. 40. 8.) word, (John 7. 46.) and deed, (Math. 3. 15.) *magnified the law and made it honorable.* (Isa. 42. 21.) this precious Christ is he whom God the Father calls "*my righteous servant, and tells me to behold him*" (Isa. 42. 1.) he whom the church calls

calls, "*the Lord our righteousness.*" (Jer. 23. 6.) and I call my "*righteousness and strength.*" (Isa. 45. 24.) By him I see myself, not only free from the *curse of the law*, (Gal. 3. 13.) yea, from all condemnation: (Rom. 8. 1.) but absolutely *complete in him*, (Col. 2. 10.) now his righteousness being unto all, and upon all, them that believe: (Rom. 3. 22.) I being found in him (Phil. 3. 9.) having on the righteousness of God, which answers all the demands of law and justice, (Rom. 8. 1.) this is to me, *to live is Christ.*

4. Christ not only covenanted, designed, undertook, and lived obedient, "*but suffered and died,*" here is the most amazing tragical scene brought to my view that was ever transacted, in this world. Here when I look, and I am bid *to look upon him whom I have pierced.* (Zech. 12. 10.) oh! shocking! transporting sight! shocking, when I see sin, *my sin*, the cause of that agonizing pain, and sorrows! yet transporting; to discover the blessed effects to me! I must have been consigned to the nethermost hell, to bear the inexorable wrath of the sin-avenging God, but lo! *my sins were laid upon him!* (Isa. 53. 6. divine justice insisted "*sin shall not go unpunished.*" Jer. 46. 28 my sins being against the *infinite God* required *infinite satisfaction!* hell torments, therefore, *nothing less*, could satisfy a just God—but, lo! the wonderful *transfer* was made, *he hath him to be sin,* &c. 2. Cor. 5. 21. *it pleased the Lord to bruise him,* Isa. 53. 10. oh! who can express, who conceive,

the poignant pains, delirious groans, exquisite agonies, and distress, he bore in my stead! while *sweating great drops of blood, falling down to the ground! crying, my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death!* Math. 26. 38. yes, he bore the very fierceness of the *wrath of almighty God for me!* Rev. 19. 15. while I thus view the amazing grief of Christ *the man of sorrows*, and therein trace his *love!* I dwell with wonder and delight, on the *interesting subject to me*; thus, *to me to live is Christ.*

5. Christ not only suffered but died, God hath said "*the wages of sin is death*" Rom. 6. 23. I had sinned, my life was forfeited, even the life of my soul; my death was due! the never ending, ever dying death, *could not make a sufficient atonement for my sins*; but here God had provided himself a lamb. John 1. 29. without shedding of blood, there is no remission, Heb. 9. 22. and the blood of bulls or goats, every human sacrifice *could not take away sin.* Heb. 10. 4. divine justice, like the avenger of blood, under the law, Numb. 25. 12. pursued, *justly pursued me; crying, blood, blood, what could I do but fall a victim*, when Christ my compassionate, never failing friend, stepped in, caught the impending blow coming upon me, and *laid down his life for me,* John 10. 15. here, and here only, is an *availing sacrifice.* Christ being *the infinite God*, co-equal with the Father; could make *infinite atonement*, and being man, *was capable* of

of sufferings, and death, which my enormous crimes deserved; 'tis thus by beholding the lamb of God, by looking unto Jesus, Heb. 12. 2. I have redemption in his blood. Col. 1. 14. I receive the atonement. Rom. 5. 11. I perceive his obedience unto death, Phil. 2. 8. is such an offering for sin, so complete as to render me accepted in the beloved. Eph. 1. 6. God declares himself well pleased. (Isa. 42. 2. thus I living upon believing on Christ, loving of Christ, and walking in Christ; find he is precious to my soul, (1. Peter 2. 7.) knowing he hath loved me, and given himself for me, an offering and sacrifice to God, of a sweet smelling savour, Eph. 5. 2. I having thus Christ to set forth crucified before my eyes, Gal. 3. 1. and sacrifice for me, 1. Cor. 5. 7. and there remaineth no more, no other sacrifice for sin. Heb. 9. 26. having by grace, clear views of my interest in his life and death, this is to me, to live is Christ.

6. Even when in in the dreary regions of the dead, altho' his body had given up the ghost; the God-head combated, and *spoiled death, and hell*; some creed-holders say, *he descended into hell*, be that as it may, his soul was not long, nor left there; *neither did his body see corruption*, Psal. 16. 10. for I know, he went to the paradise of God, the self same day of his crucifixion. Luke 23. 43. the accuser of the brethren Rev. 12. 10. assaulted my elder brother sharply in the days of his flesh; Math. 4. 3. tempting him

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with the world, presumption, and unbelief; how much more, when he had by the hands of wicked men, brought him as supposed, into his regions of darkness! he fell with all the powers of hell could muster, on the dead body of Christ, but, as one awoke he put on strength, conquered not only death, *but him also that had the power of death, the Devil! spoiled all their principalities, and powers, Col. 2. 15. took away the keys of Hell, and Death from them! Rev. 1. 18. still holds them in his possession, opens, and no man can shut; and shuts that no man can open; Rev. 3. 7. thus my enemies, whom I have so often feared, are absolutely overcome, sin, my worst enemy hath lost his sting, the threatening of Jehovah took place, O death, I will be thy plagues, O grave, I will be thy destruction! (Hosea 13. 14.) 'tis done! I have no enemy to fear! but now my employ shall be to exult and say, "thanks to God, who giveth me the victory, through my Lord Jesus Christ: 1. Cor. 15. 57. the present enjoyment of this is, to me to live is Christ.*

7. To complete the work of my redemption, *Christ not only arose from the dead, but ascended into glory; here my thoughts follow him, which gives new life to my soul; he is become the first fruits of them that sleep, 1. Cor. 15. 20. I shall rise also, yea, I do rise with him! Col. 3. 3. here I see him and his work honored of the Father, in that he raised him from the dead. Rom. 4. 25. here I perceive him ascended*
on

on high, to receive, and to give good gifts even to rebellious me! Psal. 68. 18. here I discover, yea feel an attraction, to Christ as my *head, and I a member!* Eph. 5. 30. and find a vital union, *being joined to the Lord in one spirit;* 1. Cor. 6. 17. *that I sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus!* Eph. 1. 3. here I view Christ, as my great high-Priest entered *into the holiest place, with his own blood!* Heb. 10. 19. pleading its invaluable, peace-making merit; and there *ever living to make intercession for me!* (Heb. 7. 25.) here I behold *him preparing a place, yea a mansion in glory for hell deserving me;* (John 14. 2.) his prayer which God the Father *always bears,* (John 11. 42.) *pleads the promise of the Father,* (John 14. 6.) in answer to this, down comes the holy ghost, the spirit of glory, and of God resting upon me; (1 Peter 4. 14.) *he takes of the things of Christ, his grace, peace, blood, righteousness, and fulness, and shews them unto me:* (John 16. 14.) now when I can by a lively faith, behold my risen Saviour, my exalted Melchisedec, my great high priest, ever living to make intercession for me in the courts above with his Father, and my Father, repeating the petition which he once made on earth; *Father I will that those which thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory,* (John 17. 24.) this is actually *to me to live is Christ.*

Eighthly and lastly, to live is Christ, when I am *looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of*
 God,

God, (2. Peter 3. 12.) this is he who is to judge the world in righteousness; (Psal. 9. 8.) he saith *behold I come quickly*, (Rev. 22. 20.) the language of my soul is *Amen*, even so come Lord Jesus! tremendous sight to the ungodly! this is the day *that shall burn like an Oven*, and all the proud and them that do wickedly shall be stubble, and burnt up; (Mal. 4. 1.) yes, *the wrath of God will be revealed from Heaven*: Jesus shall appear in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that *know not God*, and obey not his glorious Gospel: (2. Thes. 1. 8.) while he comes to be admired in and by all them that believe: (2. Thes. 1. 10.) they shall be mine he saith, in the day that I make up my jewels, (Mal. 3. 17.) O happy day! I he saith will raise them up at the last day: John 6. 40.) yes, even my body shall be all immortalized, like to Christ's glorious body, (Phil. 3. 21.) and so having boldness before him at his coming: (1. John 4. 17.) having had here the earnest of the purchased possession, (Eph. 1. 14.) I shall share as joint-heir with my elder brother, the incorruptable inheritance which *fadeth not away*, reserved in Heaven in safe hands for me, who am kept in the same hands by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, (1. Peter 1. 5.) and shall have my approving sentence pronounced by my friend *come ye blessed &c.* I and all the unnumbered ransomed of the Lamb, we shall mount up together in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord: (1. Thes. 4. 17.) now to have my mind delighted with the ideas, to be transacted on that great day, by him whom
having

having not seen, I love: (1. Peter 1. 8.) thus to behold Christ living, suffering dying, atoning, conquering, rising, and reigning for me: and by his holy spirit, drawing, pardoning, adopting, leading, renewing, comforting, sealing and finally approving me in the day of redemption, is I apprehend living a life of faith in the Son of God, (Gal. 2. 20.) or in other words, to me to live is Christ.

What is, *to me to die is gain?* this I apprehend is the inseperable consequence of the former; whoever can say as described, *to me to live is Christ*; can with propriety say, *to me to die is gain*. O who would not be a gainer? what an insatiate desire is in every heart after *gain*; how will not man ransack sea and land, for this *gain, gain, gain*, even to the hazzard of soul and body: but alas! the mistake is at first setting out: 'tis not the gospel way, *Christ*, they chuse; but some pleasing object of sense; pleasure, profit, or honor; which this transitory world presents to their view! here they dip, and dive; conceiving *if this were but obtained, O what a gainer!* and after all the toil, *laboring for that which satisfieth not*: (Isa. 55. 2.) the sum total of the acquisitions are, *vanity of vanities, and vexation of spirit!* Eph. 11. 8. myself have been one who for many years was *grasping a shadow* instead of substance I imagined, *O there it lies! could I but gain that, I should be completely happy*; but was only tantalized with disapointment; still crying *who will shew me any good?* (Psal. 4. 6.) but now, seeking here and there to no purpose; I heard a voice, (Reader by the same voice,

God in his word calls thee) saying *look unto me, and be saved*; Isa. 45. 22. I looked! and instantly saw by faith saw *the pearl Christ*—I claspt him in the arms of faith, and find in him all fullness; “the unsearchable riches of Christ is an immense treasure!” (Eph. 1. 23.) the Lord is my portion, saith my soul; Lam. 3. 24. a present portion, and therefore will I hope in him for perpetual eternal gain; *to die is gain*.

First; it is *an exemption from all evil*, and second *a possession of all good*. First *I shall be exempted from all pains and sickness of the body*. (Rev. 21. 4.) What a variety of this attends the human frame; O sin! sin! what multitudes of evil follow thee; I through mercy am not bearing from night to morning, and from morning to night; for days, weeks, months, and years, the excruciating pains which thousands of my poor miserable fellow species labor under; yet I daily labour under a complication of pains, from gravel, asthma, palsay, and growing infirmities of old age; well, by and by I shall put off this tabernacle, and then drop every affliction forever; this I gain to die.

Secondly, *I shall gain a freedom from all anxiety of mind, or pain of soul*, the wicked have their minds like the troubled sea: (Isa. 57. 20.) and not only they, but the people of God have their minds greatly perplexed from a variety of causes, which with anxious desire of hope, love, hate, impatience, pride, lust, and unbelief

belief: Yea the world, flesh, and devil, are at times combined to vex and harrass my soul; I see the truth of that assertion, *this is not your rest, it is polluted;* (Mica. 2. 10.) but there is none of this in Heaven; there all is peace, and assurance forever, (Isa. 32. 17.) there shall *be no more pain*, either of soul or body, this is to me, to *die is Gain*.

Thirdly. My gain will be augmented by *an entire destruction of the old man which is corrupt; according to the deceitful lusts.* (Eph. 4. 22.) oh! I am perswaded none knows the depth of Man's fall but such as are risen from it, by and with Christ: (Col. 3. 1.) none see the breadth, purity and demands of God's holy law, [Psal. 19. 7.] until the light of the glorious gospel of Christ hath shined in their hearts; [2. Cor. 4. 6.] the heart knoweth its own bitterness [Prov. 14. 10.] the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it? [Jer. 17. 9.] the carnal mind is enmity against God Rom. 8. 7. can the devil be worse? alas! I find the old man is crucified, [Rom. 6. 6.] he is not dead, but struggles for life, some times so violently, that the twinge seem stronger than I apprehend him to be before he received his death wound: Whatever some soreing professors say of this carnal mind, being absolutely slain; I find myself forced to complain with an eminent servant of Christ, which I think is outstript but by few "*when I would do good, evil is present with me.*" [Rom. 7. 21.] "*And in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing*"

[Rom. 7. 18.] I find this great and mighty I struggles hard for the mastery; and when he for a season seems conquered, oh! he is but knocked down, like a stunning blow; but recovers, gets strength, and afresh, *lusteth again against the spirit, so that I cannot do the thing that I would.* [Gal. 5. 17.] my spirit, my regenerate part would *pray with the spirit, and with the understanding also:* [1. Cor. 14. 15.] but even this exercise, this *my most solemn address to a holy God*, who I know is infinitely wise, and trieth my very reins and heart, yet in the very act; this old man, this *degenerate part*, injects pride, insensibility, ingratitude, wordly-mindedness formallity, unbelief, impatience, irreverance, and such wandering from him with whom *I have to do!* [Heb. 4. 13.] so that altho' I often catch my mind basely straying, and chide, grieve, and charge it; would bind it to its good behaviour, yet alas! almost instantly I am gone *like the fools eye wandering to the ends of the earth,* [Prov. 17. 24.] and cry out, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?* [Rom. 7. 24.] now *to die in the Lord will render me blessed;* [Rev. 14. 13.] this carnal mind, this old man will be *no more!* this I gain by dying, *to die is gain.*

Perhaps it may here be objected, how is such a state of warfare consistant with the state before described, of *living upon Christ, walking in Christ, rejoicing in Christ all the day, &c?* I answer quite consistant: did you never read the Christian's triumph, *we glory in tribulations*

tribulations! [Rom. 5. 3.] this calls forth his martial spirit, *waring a good warfare*, [1. Tim. 1. 18.] fighting the good fight [1. Tim. 6. 12.] denying ourselves, [Math. 16. 24.] taking hold of Gods strength, [Isa. 57. 5.] and none but the Christian hereby can possibly overcome this innate foe self. But altho' the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, [Jer. 17. 9.] and the enemy comes in like a flood, (Isa. 59. 19.) the spirit of the Lord lifts up the standard Christ, and his cross! and the christian glories even in the heat of the battle, saying "in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that hath loved us" (Rom. 8. 37.) and thus though sometimes strongly opposed, can say the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my songs &c. (Isa. 12. 2.) thus without foes there would be no fighting; without fighting, no overcoming: but to him that overcometh are exceeding great and precious promises made, (Rev. 2. 7. 11. 17. 28. and 3. 5. 12. 21.) thus to die is gain.

Fourthly. I shall be delivered from sin, this is the evil of all evils, the very root of bitterness, (Heb. 12. 15.) when this is destroyed all the baleful produce must consequently cease; yes the very being of sin shall be utterly destroyed, and in the fullest sence of the word I shall be dead indeed unto sin, (Rom. 6. 11.) O blessed state! happy deliverance from all sin! surely to die is gain.

Fifthly

Fifthly. I shall be exempted from the temptation of the Devil; the accuser of the brethren will be so cast out; (Oh! what greivous combats have helpless, I had; yea wounds, foils, and falls, by this strong man arm'd, who long kept his house and goods in peace, until the stronger came upon him, and how long and loath was he, yea still is to have his armour taken away wherein he trusteth: (Luke 11. 22.) well, all this conflict will now shortly end, I shall gain a freedom from Satan's temptations; here is gain; and yet all which has been mentioned is but the negative part.

I shall possitively gain, first, the enjoyments of all goods! God himself! I through grace claim the promise, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God, (Math. 5. 8.) this is the spirits work here purifying the heart by faith; (Acts 15. 9.) O what a sight, to see the infinitely glorious, holy, wise, good, and true God; the mysterious triune, father, son, and holy ghost one God! he will be manifested to me; I shall know as I am known; (1. Cor. 13. 12.) I shall see him as he is; (1. Thes. 4. 17. I shall discover while I contemplate with delight the wonderful first cause how and why his heart was moved to regard sinful man, and to cast down Angels into everlasting fire, Jude 6. here I shall know what the Apostle means, when he says for his great love, wherewith he hath loved us. Eph. 2. 4. why Jesus first took man's wretched case in hand, to stand forth a substitute
to

to live, obey, and die; the just for the unjust, to bring us to God; (1. Peter 3. 18.) here I shall see the wonderful discriminating work of God the Holy Ghost, upon my heart, that while thousands around me, under the same gospel, remained as *hard as Rocks*, and as insensible as to spirituals, as *the beast that perish*; it broke in with *marvellous light* upon my soul, I felt the spirits drawings, (John 12. 32.) heard the Shepherds voice, (John 10.) knew the effectual call, (Math. 11. 28.) was *made willing*! (Psal. 110. 3.) saw the suitability, and fulness of Christ to save me a lost sinner, (Math. 18. 11.) was enabled to *come to Christ*, (Math. 11. 28.) to *lay hold on him*, (1. Tim. 6. 12.) to *receive him*, (John 1. 12.) to *put him on*, (Rom. 13. 14.) and by grace, (tho' too slowly and heedless) to *walk in him*; (Col. 2. 6.) O! to view this approving God, as he is! (1. Thes. 4. 17.) I find even now looking through this glass of the gospel by Faith, a glimpse almost overpowers me; O! what to see him face to face! (Rev 22. 4.) surely in his presence there is *fulness of joy*, and pleasures for evermore, (Psal. 16.) and *this God is mine*, I shall enjoy him for ever, surely *to die is gain*.

2. I shall gain a sight of, and communion with the *innumerable company of Angels*, (Heb. 12. 22) those glorious spirits who excell in strength, (Psal. 103. 20.) who for ages probably, before these worlds were

were made, ~~but~~ been inured to the sweet employ of praise and adoration. [Psal 84. 4.] who in the time of severe trial, stood firm, and kept their first estate; [Jude 6.] those companions will be able, I apprehend, to define to me the wonders of creation, being eye witnesses, and repeat the very hymn they sung together, on the morn of creation, when the morning stars shouted for joy; [Job 38. 7.] O! who would not die to be admitted into such company? verily *to die is gain.*

3: My possitive gain will be greatly augmented *in the company of all the redeemed of the Lamb*, what a multitude that no man can number! [Rev. 7. 9.] redeemed from among men of Adam's fallen race, all shouting the new song, which Angels cannot touch, *to him that bath loved us.* [thus far the Angels can go, but leave the solo to the Saints] *and washed us from our sins in his own blood!* how delightful the theme, how happy the company, the communion of Saints have often elated, and edified my soul here below, when with one heart and one mouth, we have glorified God together [Rom 15. 6] but there to meet those with whom I lived co-temporary here, and in Church-fellowship, have so often *taken sweet council together*, [Psal. 55. 14.] and in mutial prayers taken hold of our Saviour's promise "*If two are agreed on earth to ask any thing in my name, it shall be done for them in Heaven*" [Math. 18. 19. 20.] now to die—I shall gain the fellowship
and

and sweet communion of my dearest friends; mongst them augmenting and sharing each others happiness, thus to die is gain.

4. *I shall gain the hearing of all the melodious songs of Angels and men; harmonious sound! delightful subjects! I have been peculiarly delighted from my child-hood, with rhyme, poetry, metre, or music; but there where all shall join in their capaciated powers, singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord; (Eph. 5. 19) how transporting! my soul is regaled at the thought, yea, it anticipates the chorus in imagination; hark! do I not hear them now? I shall, I shortly shall, hear what John heard; the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth: (Rev. 19 6.) first the Hebrews hundred, forty and four thousand; then the multitude which no man can number, (Rev. 7. 9.) crying with a loud voice, now the Saints! now the Angels alternately; then in united chorus—but hark! again methinks I anticipate that universal shout which John heard; (Rev. 5. 13. 14.) every creature which is in the Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying—blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever; and the four mysterious living creatures confirming the song with their shout, Amen! with the harpers*

barping with their harps, (Rev 5. 8.) now if well performed parts, in agreeable chords, arising from grateful hearts making melody in their hearts to the Lord, (Eph. 5. 19.) is so charming to the ear, as to delight my very soul here among mortals; O! how will my sense of hearing be ravished amidst all the choristers above! thus to die is gain:

5. *My eyes shall be regaled with delightful sights!—* here the eye is never satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing; but there will be objects sufficient to satisfy the capacious desires of both; there I shall see without a vail the *holy City*, new Jerusalem, *its garnished foundations! its pearly gates! its golden streets! its transparent lustre! the redeemed, saved nations, walking in its light; God and the Lamb: Is it possible that I should forget that blessed sight the Lamb; no, then let my right hand forget her cunning—I have taken a cursory view of Jesus in a display of the great three one, but my Heaven will peculiarly consist in viewing, and enjoying my incarnate God! I shall see him as he is; (1. John 3. 2.) delightful sight, glorious body, not now with his head crowned with thorns, his back furrow'd with scourging, his face besmeared with spitting, his body bathed in bloody sweat, that man hanging on Calvary between two thieves, who bore my sins in his own body on the tree: no, I shall see the God man, in all the fulness of the godhead bodily; Col.*

[Col. 2. 9.] this is the meritorious cause of all; this will raise my soul to the very summit of Heaven! gaining this blessed sight, transported with the glorious view, seeing I shall be like him too! *to die is gain.*

6. *I shall feed upon delicious fare!*—hold, hold, perhaps an objector may say, now you are beside the mark; picturing a Mahometan paradise, whereas the things spoken of in scripture, are only figures of things metaphorical expressions; but not “the thing itself;” I answer first, who told you so? my God tells me I shall eat, tells me what I shall eat of—*the tree of life*; tells me where it grows—*in the midst of the Paradise of God*: (Rev. 2. 7.) if this is all metaphorical, may you not as well deem all the Bible a heap of metaphors? take you your metaphorical Bible, and Heaven for me; I expect realities, *God’s word is truth*: (John 17. 17.) but I answer by asking *are my senses to be destroyed, or refined*, what a body like unto Christ’s glorious body, and insensible; what then shall I gain by getting Heaven? nothing it seems really to be heard, felt, seen, tasted, nor enjoyed; deplorable condition! stoical state! melancholy place! but I expect *a Heaven of God’s own prescribing*: he tells me I shall be like him, for I *shall see him as he is!* (1. John 3. 2.) shall have *a Kingdom*. (Math. 25. 34.) *a crown* (Rev. 2. 10.) shall sit with him *in his throne*, (Rev. 3. 21.) that the Lamb shall lead and feed me (Rev. 7. 17.) and if all this is *metaphor*, I loose *my heaven*; but I through grace expect the fulfillment of

that promise in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie hath promised; (Titus 1. 2.) and there to go in my senses; not destroyed but refined; and there to drink of the water of life, (Rev. 22. 8.) to eat of the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruit; [Rev. 22. 2.] to hear the harpers harping with their harps, (Rev. 5. 8) to see God's face, [Rev. 22. 4.] and God shall wipe away all tears from my eyes; (Rev. 7. 17.) thus I apprehend I shall enjoy sensible, actual not metaphorical gain.

7. My soul shall be sweetly regaled, in conjunction with my Bodily senses. God is a spirit, (John 4. 23.) and as such is every way adequate to the capacious soul of Man—now to enjoy the communications of his love to the soul, is what the world knows not; [1. Cor. 2. 14.] I would call forth as a witness to this truth any child of God, grown to some maturity in Gospel grace, and of these God saith *ye are my witnesses*, [Isa. 43. 10.] when in some seasons you have been favored to hold fellowship with the Father, and Son; [1. John 1. 3.] coming boldly to the throne of grace! [Heb. 4. 6.] coming in by the door, [John 10. 7.] crying by the spirit of adoption *Abba Father!* [Rom. 8. 15.] what have you felt in these happy moments? I know you will agree with me and say “O those were delightfull seasons” nothing less than times of refreshing coming from the presence of the Lord! [Acts 3. 19.] an open door was set before me, [Isa. 22.

22. 22.] by whom *I had access with boldness!* (Rom. 5. 2.) the eternal God manifested himself (John 17. 6.) saying *I am thy God*, I took hold by faith, saying *my Lord and my God*; (Isa. 41. 10.) I found myself *Christ's*, consequently Abraham's seed, and an heir according to the promise: (Gal. 3. 29.) thus I found all the promises in the book of God *my own!* they are all in Christ yea and amen, (2. Cor. 1. 20.) I asked, and received, and *my joy was full*; (John 16. 24.) yes, it was *joy unspeakable, and full of Glory!* (1. Peter 1. 8.) an inward Heaven, (Math. 5. 3.) well then, if a glimpse of Gods countenance seem in the glass of the Gospel (2. Cor. 3. 18.) by the perspective of faith, darkly, (1. Cor. 13. 12.) do communicate such bliss, as ravishes the soul here; what emanations of divine love shall I enjoy, when capaciated in body and soul, to bear an exceeding, and eternal weight of glory; [2. Cor. 4. 17.] *thus to die is gain.*

8. To crown all, *my gain will be eternal!* surely, the perpetuity of the bliss, will greatly heighten the happiness—a little fluctuation would be exceeding painful; *but there is no more pain* (Rev. 21. 4.) I have often thought the greater property I posessed, if *my all* were embarked in *one Vessel amidst dangerous rocks and storms*, in proportion to my property, would be my fears and anxiety, for its preservation: Consequently, if divine grace is the most valuable thing in the world, for a mortal

mortal to possess ; the living in any suspicion of the hazzard of loozing it, must admit the greatest fears ; but, he that feareth hath torment, (1. John 4. 18.) whereas he that can credit the truth, I give *unto my Sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish &c.* (John 10. 28. 29.) such a one sees himself in the hand of him who hath said *I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness,* (John 10. 28. 29.) here he is safe, thus my bliss will be permanent and everlasting, so that when ages, unnumbered ages are elapsed, my happiness is as that moment entered on eternity : Thus *to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

I am to make some use—First—Is the Christian's life thus living upon Christ? examine reader, hearer, and particularly thou my own soul; dost thou thus live *by, upon, and in him?* hast thou in fact a Christ of thy own? *he that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life:* (1. John 5. 12.) what art thou, dead or alive to God, is it possible to live and not know it? if thou hast a Christ of thy own, thou livest by him, upon, to, for and in him; see to it, art thou in Christ? *if any man is in Christ he is a new creature.* (2. Cor. 5. 17.) In order to love Christ we must *know him;* [Phil. 3. 10.] in order to know him we must have *fellowship with him,* (1. Cor. 1. 9.) in order to have fellowship, we must have likeness can two walk together, except they are agreed? (Amos,

3. 3.) closely therefore examine thyself whether thou art in the faith; if so Jesus Christ is in thee, or if not thou art a reprobate, oh! why will rational creatures deceive their own souls? (2. Tim. 3. 13.) what know ye not your own selves, (2. Cor. 13. 5.) what ever learning and never come to the knowledge of the truth! (2. Tim. 3. 7.) if thou upon examination knewest the truth, that is Christ; he hath made thee free, (John 8. 32.) now then thy business is with me to say, to know, and to feel; *to me to live is Christ, &c.*

Secondly. Always remember the cause and the effect! the means and end are inseperable: There can be no gain to die, unless we live by Christ; let this plain inference sink down in your heart: if in this life thou livest not *by the faith of, and in the son of God,* unless he is precious to thy soul now thou canst never *admire him at his coming,* (2. Thes. 1. 10.) thou canst not be looking for, and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, (2. Peter 3. 12) and for the glorious appearing of the great God, (Tit. 2. 13.) unless thou hast some knowledge of, and acquaintance with Christ: but may expect to hear those cutting words from the Judge's own mouth (Math. 7. 23.) *I never knew you.* Awake Christless sinner be thy life ever so moral, be thy profession never so high; the sin of unbelief were it possible to be alone, is enough to condemn thee now, (John 3. 18.) and to *damn thee for ever:* (Mark

16. 16.) but oh! mind the command; give diligence to make your calling and election *sure*. (2. Peter 1. 10.)

Thirdly. If upon honest scrutiny into thy eternal concerns; and (this is thy employ daily, if a Christian; otherwise thou bearest that sacred name in vain) thou findest *thy rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and hast no confidence in the flesh*. (Phil. 3. 3.) all hail thou highly favor'd of the Lord! *the lines are fallen to thee in pleasant places*, yea thou hast *a goodly heritage*, (Psal. 16. 6.) nothing less than *the Lord is thy portion*, (Lam. 3. 24.) tell over thy portion if thou canst; 'tis impossible! *'tis the unsearchable riches of Christ*; (Eph. 6. 8.) thou canst say, *my Lord, my God, my strength, my song, my shield, my sun, my wisdom, my righteousness, my sanctification, my redemption, my beloved, my friend, my Saviour, and my all*: Surely thou canst say with good old Jacob, *I have enough*, (Gen. 33. 11.) go then and live upon thy means like a man; *happy are the people who have the Lord for "their God."*

Fourthly. My next use is for consolation to the christian: O let this two-fold motive, pleasure and profit induce you to the pleasantest employ upon earth, *looking unto Jesus*, (Heb. 12. 2.) *light, life, love, joy, peace*, yea all that can conduce to make your souls, *happy, and holy, flow from Christ*, say then with his deciples, to whom shall we go but unto thee? (John 6. 68.) O ye
that

that have tasted that the *Lord is gracious*; (1. Peter 2. 3.) remember that taste! repeat your draught and *drink O friends, yea drink abundantly O beloved.* (Song 5. 1.) the open fountain floweth freely; (Rev. 22. 17.) *delight yourselves in the Lord*, (Psal. 37. 4.) all our springs are in him, (Psal. 87. 7.) this is a life worth living for, yea, his loving kindness is better than life, (Psal. 63. 3.) the joy of the Lord is your strength, (Neh. 8. 10.) thus live upon *Christ the bread of life*, (John. 6. 33.) for daily bread: cry out and shout thou inhabitant of Zion, (Isa. 12.) and say with boldness, to angels, men, and devils, *behold God is my salvation!* (Isa. 12. 2.) thus beholding thy unspeakable priviledge as God's own dear child, (Jer. 31. 20.) laying hold of his strength, (Isa. 27. 5.) believing his word, *I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness!* (Isa. 41. 10.) Christ the eternal God, is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: (Gen. 33. 27.) hereby thy profiting will appear not only to thy self, but to all. (1. Tim. 4. 15.) thy *strengb, faith, patience, zeal, humility, meekness, love, hope, holiness, every grace*, shall be in thee and abound, [2. Peter 1. 8.] increasing with the increase of God, [Col. 2. 19.] growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ; [2. Peter 3, 18.] walking with God; [Gen. 17. 1.] seeing him that is ~~invisible~~; [Heb. 11. 27.] beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, thou shalt be changed into the same image from glory to glory

[2. Cor. 3. 18.] from glorious grace here to glory above, [Psal. 84. 11.] here is a life worth living for: Then shalt thou experimentally say with me; *for me to live is Christ and to die is gain.*

I search, research, pry, and explore;
Stretching my finite mind:
But all, a deep without a shore,
The love of Christ I find.!

Fifthly. My last use is by way of application to all; see to it you who bear about you the name of Christ, what a high profession you make, in bearing that adorable name! O 'tis a *name above every name in heaven and earth.* [Phil. 2. 9.] let all that nameth the name of Christ, *depart from iniquity;* [2. Tim, 2. 19.] surely, if not we take his sacred, saving name in vain! [Jam. 1. 26.] oh! how long hast thou Professor lived in this scarlet sin of forgetfulness of God? [Psal 50. 22.] if this is now the case consider! what wilt thou do by thy sins, unless they are forgiven? wilt thou live in them, what! and die in them too? then know, *where Christ is, thou shalt never come,* [John 8. 24.] and know there is no other name given under Heaven whereby thou canst be saved, [Acts 4. 12.] *God is just,* (Rom. 3. 10.) all that thou canst do cannot appease his wrath, (Math. 3. 7.) what wilt thou do without a Saviour? *without Christ thou canst do nothing.*

nothing : (John 15. 5.) what a christian without Christ, when thou art made sensible of this, how wilt thou admire the love and wisdom of God, in the gospel plan, to discover him to be *a just God and a Saviour* ! (Isa. 45. 21) that *mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other* ! (Psal. 58. 10.) that God can be just and justify him that believeth in Jesus ; (Rom. 3. 26.) if thou hast seen the requirements of God's holy law, (Lev. 18. 19.) and found thyself *by it exposed to the curse* : (Gal. 3. 10.) then to see a Saviour, a Substitute step in, and catch the blow, and take away the curse from *thy guilty soul* ! (Gal. 3. 13.) by laying down his life, *the just for the unjust, to bring thee unto God*. (1. Peter 3. 18.) O! how will such a Saviour take with thee, under such circumstances, thou wouldest gladly say, *I am determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified*, (1. Cor. 2. 2.) John 17. 2. & Phil. 3. 8. 9. 10.)

But can a poor sinner live insensible of such love ! hear, O Heavens, and give ear O earth ! (Isa. 1. 2.) what a rational creature, slighting such a benefactor ; his maker, preserver, redeemer, and not love him ! stupid wretch ; art thou that monster in Man's shape ; *what not love a dying God* ! then hear thy doom ; thou art condemned already. (John 3. 19.) and shocking to think, unless thou art deprived of thought, as well as reason ; yet this once awake, and hear the word of the

the Lord, *if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranæthæ.* [1. Cor. 16. 22.] that is, *let him be accursed, 'til the Lord come*; shocking case! under Jehovah's curse; oh! consider this all ye that forget God, (Psal. 50. 22.) awake for God's sake! awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead; and Christ shall give thee light, (Eph. 5. 14.) who knows but the curse only remains 'til the Lord comes in the spirit; and not his final coming to judgment? happy for thee so coming: his reward is with him; pardon, life, and peace, and his work before him: (Isa. 40. 10.) O! that I might be instrumental for thy salvation here, and for ever.

But one word more to the believer in Christ, what hast thou found? *the pearl of great price*; I say again employ thy *soul*, and *time*, in telling over thy *immense* treasure, *live upon Christ, as thy daily bread.* (Luke 6. 11.) and by and by, *him whom unseen thou lovest.* (1. Peter 1. 8.) shall come *to be admired in all them that believe* [2. Thes. 1. 10.] then with me for ever thy gain increases, while Christless sinners are crying *peace, and safety, sudden destruction cometh upon them at unawares, and they shall not escape*; [Mar. 13. 36] O! what will be their gain; hell fire for ever! [Rev. 19. 3.] Reader, quickly, while thou hast time, escape for thy life, [Gen. 19. 17.] fly to Christ, [Heb. 6. 18.] walk in him, (Col. 2. 6.) and soon shalt thou be with
him

him for ever, [1. Thess. 4. 18.) to this enjoyment of
Christ here and for ever, may the Lord bring both
thee and me,

so heartily prayeth

thy soul's well wisher,

ANDREW KESSELL.



For ever, [1. Thess. 4. 18.] to the enjoyment of
Christ here and for ever, may the Lord bring both
thee and me,

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ANDREW KESTELL.



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